# UNITY

*FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION*

## In Memoriam

## MRS. ANNIE BESANT

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## The Field

*"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."*

### The Third International Conference for India Held in Geneva

By Dr. Taraknath Das, Ph. D.

In the past Indian nationalists, specially Indian exiles residing in various parts of the world, have done their best to spread truth about India and thus counteract anti-Indian propaganda carried on by powerful interests. These Indian exiles in more ways than one have tried to make the issue of Indian Independence a factor in World Politics.

It is a very happy sign that the intelligent public of the world are taking keen interest in what is happening in India and they recognize that India is a very important factor in World Politics. (I have discussed this phase of the Indian question, in my book "India in World Politics" which has been suppressed in India by British authorities.) During the last few years various organizations, favoring Indian Freedom have been established and supported by foreign friends of India. They have done splendid work to educate international public opinion in their own countries. But in 1932, through the efforts of Mme. Ellen Horup of Denmark, Mrs. Cousins of Ireland and India, Dr. Privat of Switzerland, Mlle. Rolland of France and many other friends of India, an International committee for India was established in Geneva. The establishment of this committee may be regarded as a land-mark in the history of Indian nationalist movement, which is every day taking the very distinct form of "India's struggle for complete independence." (I may say with great satisfaction that the establishment of this committee is only a partial fulfilment of my ideas which I personally advocated to men like the late Lala Lajpat Rai and others as early as 1925.)

Since the inauguration of this committee, much salient work has been done through the untiring efforts of the Hon. Secretary, Mme. Horup and her many co-workers, in the form of spreading correct information regarding India's struggle for freedom. On the 19th of September the Third International Conference for India was held in Geneva, under the auspices of the "International Committee for India."

(*Continued on page 67*)

# UNITY

*"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"*

Volume CXII MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1933 Number 4

## BROTHERHOOD

"What is the great mark of spiritual types of humanity —what the quality that shines out above all others wherever they appear upon earth?

"It is that quality that today we name Brotherhood, the recognition of that unity of life that makes for all embracing compassion and boundless self-sacrifice. Those are the types that we see in these great ones of our race, they who have unfolded the spiritual nature, who show out the glory of the Spirit. It is very marked that in every one of those mighty teachers of the past this is the quality which above all others shines out as their distinguishing mark among the men of the generation in which they are born.

The love of the helpless and the weak,
The effort ever to raise those who are downtrodden and oppressed,
The effort to share, to uplift, to make happy—in a word, to save,

that is the great spiritual characteristic of all the Saviours of the world, and therefore at the present time those are making ready for the beginning of the coming race who show out in conception and in practice their belief in the universal brotherhood of man.

"The recognition of life in each rather than of the separated form, the recognition of the one self in all rather than the separated selves that are marked out by the separated bodies—that will be the great mark in consciousness, the new unfolding; wherever that recognition of unity is made, there is one of the signs of the coming race.

"And then, side by side with that, growing inevitably out of it, a breadth and liberality of tolerance will mark those in whom the sense of unity is beginning to unfold.

All that is narrow and exclusive,
All that tends to separate one from another,
All that emphasizes differences instead of emphasizing likenesses,

all those are against the unfolding of the consciousness that knows the One in the many, and recognizes Divinity in all."

—*Annie Besant*, in "The Changing World."

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This issue of UNITY is dedicated to the glorious memory of Annie Besant.

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We can imagine nothing wiser than President Roosevelt's superbly prompt and decisive action in ordering the purchase of surplus farm products for use by the unemployed. Despatches state that $75,000,000 is to be used at once to buy food commodities to be given to the poor. Here is an agricultural policy that seems to us to be at once constructive and beneficent—a policy in marked contrast to the hideous waste and folly of deliberately destroying products to raise prices in the public markets. Here is also a relief policy which promises to be genuinely effective. It is the fact that these two aspects of the program fit together so perfectly which justifies us in calling the President's action here an instance of genuine statesmanship. For that's what statesmanship is—the combining of apparently conflicting elements of a chaotic situation into a relation of mutual service. Equally commendable is Mr. Roosevelt's determination to make the problem of relief this coming winter a direct federal responsibility. With the administration's active, devoted and socially-minded leaders in direct charge of this enormous task, we can believe that the work will be achieved with a minimum of waste and disorder, and with a maximum of effective aid to the victims of the depression. There is also the "inflation" side of these matters, if it may be called such. The greatest menace to the country at this moment, and the one serious attack upon the President, is the agitation of certain senators and other irresponsibles for monetary inflation—the flooding of the country with cheap and progressively worthless money. If this menace is to be removed, this attack repelled, it must be by making inflation unnecessary. And this can best be done by securing whatever benefits there may be in inflation, without incurring its appalling dangers. Just this Mr. Roosevelt is accomplishing, we believe, in making these huge purchases of farm products for the poor, in providing or promising funds for direct relief, in pushing the gigantic public works program, in financing new equipment for the railroads, and in loaning money to the banks for credit and deposit guarantees. The President's leadership never looked better to us than at this moment!

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Is the Socialist Party breaking up? The question is suggested by the withdrawal from the Party of three of its most influential leaders—Heywood Broun and Paul Blanshard, in New York, and Upton Sinclair in California. The first remains the free-lance he has always really been; Blanshard has joined the La Guardia Fusion movement in the New York municipal campaign; and Sinclair according to press reports, is seeking the Democratic nomination for the governorship of his state. Along with this one recalls the conference which met in Chicago on September 2nd and 3rd last, at the call of the League for Independent Political Action, and organized a movement for a

united Farmer-Labor Party, which should be altogether apart from Socialism, save as the latter will be free to join and be absorbed by the former. What has happened is not far to seek. First of all, the results of the Socialist campaign for the presidency last year were utterly discouraging. When as able a leader as Norman Thomas, appealing to a people beset by the worst economic depression in American history, polled far less than a million votes, it was conclusively demonstrated that the Party is making no headway in winning the allegiance of the popular masses. Following this experience came the amazing developments of the Democratic administration under the leadership of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Suddenly, without warning, the party of Jefferson, Jackson and Cleveland became an out-and-out radical political force, moving at one gigantic step into an era of State Capitalism which can only in the end, if it succeeds at all, keep going into an era of Socialism. What is there left for the Socialist Party to do at such a time as this? In addition, as a further demoralizing fact, there is the collapse of Socialism abroad—in England, Italy, Germany, Austria. In country after country on the continent it has proved itself utterly incompetent to meet the challenge of Fascism on the one hand and Communism on the other. Yes, these are serious days for Socialism. Its future was never more uncertain.

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We have no doubt that Hitler will maintain his power in Germany for a long time to come. We think it foolish to surmise that his regime may disintegrate and fall. Other dictatorships—Horthy's, Mussolini's, the Bolshevik's—have not been shaken. And for the same reason that pertains in Germany! The dictator absorbs all power into his hands, destroys opposition minorities, and organizes supreme military force. The Reich is today an armed camp—drilling, marching, saluting is everywhere the order of the day. Nor is this militarization of a people solely for purposes abroad; it is also directed to ends at home, among others the perpetuation of the dictator's rule. So Hitler is here to stay, and all policy must be based upon this premise. But we doubt if everything is going to be "peaches and cream" for him and his Nazis. Already signs are multiplying that the economic problem is refusing to settle itself according to schedule. It is not for mere purposes of discipline that the Chancellor has decreed that every German must go without one meal a month and donate the saving (17 cents) to the relief of the unemployed. Hitler's own plea to his followers to be "patient," to realize that everything cannot be done at once, has some not unimaginable relationship to existing conditions. Most significant is the recent order of Kurt Schmidt, high official in the Nazi regime, suspending the warfare against Jewish department stores, and declaring that the whole endeavor to make distinction between "Aryan" and "non-Aryan" in business is economically disastrous. The fact is that Germany can no more be pulled out of the hole of the depression by parades and mobilizations and symbols and slogans than America can. And the fact also is that world hostility to Nazi barbarism is beginning to register in terms of dollars and cents. Specifically, the Jewish boycott is already accomplishing its purpose. The Hitlerites cannot be overthrown—their sheer military power is too great! But they can be brought to their senses, if any. And the millions of German citizens, whom we still believe to be victims rather than supporters of the Nazi terror, can be taught what their rulers are really costing them.

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The publication of Hitler's *"Mein Kampf"* by the Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston, is an event of great importance—all the more so as this publication was opposed by certain Jewish interests led by the *American Hebrew*. Why any Jew should desire to suppress this autobiography of the Nazi leader is difficult to understand, even under the conditions of fear and horror now dominant in the world of Israel. It is curious business if the Nazi suppression of Jewish books in Germany is to be matched by the Jewish suppression of Nazi books in America. But this book is a "vile book," says Mr. Louis Rittenberg, writing in the pages of the *American Hebrew*. The very reason, we answer, why no obstacle should be placed in the path of its publication, not only in this country but throughout the world! Here in these pages is the real Adolf Hitler, the man's own statement of his crazy doctrines and mad fanaticisms. Thus is the Nazi leader stripped naked, with not a rag of apology or tatter of extenuation to cover the ugliness of his person. Look at him, brethren; hear what he has to say; note what he proposes to do! In all that you have read about Hitler, since first he took possession of the Reich, have you ever met anything as terrible as this? The worst we have been told about this man, in other words, is not anti-Nazi propaganda, but the truth. The inexpressible value of such a book as *"Mein Kampf"* is to be found in this simple fact, that it convicts Adolf Hitler out of his own mouth. It constitutes within itself a veritable arsenal of ammunition for use in the world-wide campaign against the Nazis. Mr. Rittenberg charges that publishing the volume in this country is "abetting Hitler propaganda in this country." But surely, Mr. Rittenberg has a strange conception of the American people if he thinks they can be reached and persuaded by a diatribe of this description, and a depressing lack of confidence in Israel's cause if he believes it can be damaged by this sort of attack. No! —give Hitler all the rope he wants. He will hang himself the quicker.

The Rockefeller Center in New York is a pretty ridiculous affair; but in its many troubles, let it be said in fairness that it plays no favorites. Our readers will remember the furor, some months ago, over the Rivera frescoes. The great Mexican painter was found to have inserted in one of his wall-pictures the figure of Lenin, and this was promptly ordered to be removed. Diego Rivera refused to comply; he was paid and dismissed; and his work was buried under a new layer of perfectly clean canvas. Now comes another controversy! It seems that an English painter, Frank Brangwyn, is providing four murals for the lobby of the Rockefeller building, the last of which is to depict the Sermon on the Mount. This artist, like his distinguished predecessor, has now been thrown into confusion by being told that he is to leave the figure of Jesus out of the picture. "I can't conceive of the Sermon on the Mount," says Mr. Brangwyn, "without the Savior." It does take some imagining, we agree. But what interests us is the perfect balance in these two episodes. Lenin must go—and Christ must go! Why they ever came in the first place, is a challenging question. Why should Lenin be placed in this monstrous monument to American capitalism? And what would the Nazarene be doing in these halls of Mammon? Surely, there is something wrong with artists, be they left or right, who would adorn a Rockefeller edifice with either Soviet or Christian heroes. Indeed, the managers of the Center seem to be the only ones who have any sense of the fitness of things. For while Lenin and Jesus may be myriads of miles apart in every other regard, they are at least at one in this—that they would abhor and despise such glorifications of money as the Rockefeller Center. Jesus, looking on the Temple in Jerusalem, said that he would destroy it, so that one stone should not stand upon another. He would say the same thing if he looked on this New York monstrosity. And Lenin would say, Amen!

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Nothing could be more touching than to read of the disposal to be made of the mortal remains of the late Dr. Frederick Starr, for years one of UNITY'S staunchest friends and most devoted editors. The passion of this great scientist's life was Japan. He had traveled in many lands, but loved Japan best. Most appropriately he died there, on his fifteenth visit to the country. Now his ashes are to be buried there, in the shadow of Fujiyama, the sacred mountain. We quote the beautiful Associated Press despatch which brings us this news:

> The site chosen is in the yard of an inn called Ogome-ya at Subashiri, the starting point of the most-used trail up the mountain, which hundreds of thousands of pilgrims pass each summer.
>
> The view from this point Dr. Starr considered one of the most perfect in the world. He recorded his love of the famous peak and his understanding of its sentimental and religious meaning to the Japanese people in a book published a decade ago, "Fujiyama, the Sacred Mountain of Japan."
>
> A simple tomb in the Buddhist fashion will be erected, carved with ideographs commemorating the American scientist's researches into the religious lore of Japan and his attachment for the country.

*Requiescat in pace!*

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## Annie Besant

A year or so ago, I named Annie Besant* as one of the ten most distinguished women of our time. Now that she is dead, it can be said that she was one of the most distinguished and surely most heroic women of all time. Bernard Shaw called her, years ago, "the most wonderful woman of the age." Her fame in England was matched only by her fame in India, her work in politics and social reform only by her work in education and religion. An accomplished writer and incomparable orator, a valiant pioneer and champion of humanitarian causes, the world leader of Theosophy, an emancipator of India, a tireless worker for mankind and withal an accomplished gentlewoman, Annie Besant was transcendent in every field she entered. Her own innate genius of mind and heart, coupled with incredible personal energy, is the sole adequate explanation of her vast achievements.

I.

Mrs. Besant's career constitutes one of the most thrilling life-stories of modern times. Beset almost from the beginning by tempestuous storms, accompanied by sensational events and terrific crises, broken by strange transformations of ideas and purposes, yet always rising to new heights of leadership and world-wide influence, this career was like that of the Valkyries for sheer splendor. At the end there came an unaccustomed peace, but the radiance lingered and in the last hours bathed her in sunset glory.

The tale divides itself into two parts—the first, *England!* Born in London, on October 1, 1847, she was the daughter of poor Irish parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Page Wood. Much of the fire in her blood, and all perhaps of her sheer love of combat, can be traced to her Gaelic ancestry. Farmed out to a devout spinster to be reared and educated, the young girl passed through a stormy adolescence to an early marriage with the Rev. Frank Besant, an Anglican churchman. For this cataclysmic experience she was utterly unprepared, and to the sedate, conventional, pious routine of a Church of England rectory quite unadapted. She endured an impossible relationship for six years, bore to her husband a son and a daughter, and then gave herself to the first great rebellion of her life. In days when such things were not done, she left her husband, and took up the independent

*Pronounced Bé-sant.

career of public activity and service which held her to the end. The whole domestic issue was dramatized in the refusal of the court to allow Mrs. Besant the custody of her children on the ground that she was morally unfit to care for them, by which was meant her advocacy, as the first woman champion, of birth control.

While temperamental reactions were basic in the break-up of her marriage, intellectual and spiritual differences were also involved. The wife of a curiously precise Church of England priest, Mrs. Besant had become an out-and-out free thinker and thus an unbeliever. It was this which led her into the discipleship of Charles Bradlaugh, which remained for years the central passion of her life. Bradlaugh, superb orator, militant iconoclast, uncompromising idealist, is chiefly remembered today for his fight for admission into the House of Commons, which convulsed English politics for a decade. He was the Robert G. Ingersoll of Britain, particularly in his magnificent platform presence and power, though Bradlaugh was an atheist, whereas Ingersoll was only an agnostic. It was under the influence of this leader of British heresy, that Mrs. Besant discovered the oratorical abilities that made her the first woman speaker of her generation. For years she shared with Bradlaugh the honor and dangers of the most brilliant forum of England. It was with him, also, that she endured prosecution for the publication of a pamphlet on birth control, from which sprang this great movement for reform long since identified with other names. The outcome of this trial, which shook the British Isles with the supreme sensation of the hour, resulted curiously in the condemnation of the pamphlet and the acquittal of the publishers. Mrs. Besant's courage in this episode was dauntless beyond compare.

After Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant became the disciple, or rather associate, of Dr. Edward Aveling, and with him wrote a brief but brilliant chapter of popular scientific education. She was now passing from the earlier negative aspects of her inner spiritual development to the later positive aspects. The next step was her conversion to Socialism, her identification with the Fabian Society, her friendship with Bernard Shaw, and her heroic championship of primitive revolutionary phases of social change.

Mrs. Besant, throughout her life, was nothing if not whole-hearted. She now became a flaming crusader for the down-trodden and oppressed. She was a veritable Joan of Arc in the battle for the liberation of the poor. She entered the East End slums of London, as the French maiden entered Orleans, lifting a banner to which the denizens of city wretchedness, particularly wayward children and friendless girls, flocked for liberation. Nothing in all the heroic story of the battle for social reform in England is more thrilling, and also pathetic, than Annie Besant's espousal of the cause of the London match-makers. The most helpless of all the underpaid and starving workers of London, these unorganized and mostly young women declared a strike which met not only with the scorn but also the alarm of English respectables. It seemed to these as though the very dregs of the population, the cesspools of the tenements and gutters, were rising to overwhelm all the beauty, talent, and security of British life. Into this fight Annie Besant, now in the first full flush of her womanhood, with her magnificent oratory, her unquenchable energy, her ardor and utter sacrifice, plunged like a paladin into the midst of battle. She lived with the strikers, walked the picket line in their company, met the brunt of the insults and contumely hurled upon them, led the fight on the public platform and before the bar of justice, and in the end carried through to triumph the first successful strike of women workers in Great Britain.

Mrs. Besant was now the most famous woman in England. Loved and hated, feared and adored, she was a power in the land. Possessed of every talent of body and of mind, dowered with boundless energy and passionate conviction, a leader of the great radical movement destined to sweep English politics in the next generation, it seemed as though a field of unparalleled public achievement were wide-open before her. Elected by the Progressive Party, so-called, to the first London County Council, her foot was on the ladder which led up to heights cloud-wrapped and thus hidden from present view. It was at this moment, when the glory of her personality was unfolding into such fame and power as no English woman outside the ranks of royalty had ever possessed, that there came, almost without warning, the strange event which cut her career as by the stroke of a surgeon's knife. I refer, of course, to Mrs. Besant's meeting with Mme. Blavatsky and her conversion to Theosophy. Before this event there was *one* woman—and after, it is as though there were another! The scene changes completely, all past interests die, old friends disappear and never return. It is a transformation, as by the waving of a wand, of all things outward and inward alike.

II.

This cataclysmic meeting with Mme. Blavatsky, in the decade of the '80's, opens the second period of Mrs. Besant's life—set in *India,* as the first period was set in England. In sensation, wonder, one might almost say miracle, this second period outdoes the first. It is the same marvelous woman, however changed, who is at work, mastering a new environment, and commanding new issues to new destinies.

At first, after her acceptance of Theosophy, Mrs. Besant remained in England, the adoring disciple of Mme. Blavatsky, as formerly she had been of Bradlaugh and Aveling. Within two years, however, the

strange leader of this mystic Eastern cult died, and Mrs. Besant fell heir to her mantle, as Elisha to the mantle of Elijah. This led to controversy not unusual in religion, and to sectarian disputes and separations which make the history of Theosophy to be strangely like that of Christianity. Mrs. Besant, however, equipped with the Blavatsky inheritance and herself dowered beyond all successful rivalry of either men or women, held easily the seat of power. In 1892 she went to India, took up her abode at Madras, founded the Central Hindu College at Benares, and here lived out the remainder of her long career as the world-leader of Theosophy. She was now wholly the preacher, prophet, priest—the champion as she had formerly been the enemy of religion. Education, propaganda, controversy, apostolic missions, mystic exercises and devotions, ecclesiastical pomp and ceremony—these were the practices of her busy days, and the very breath of her nostrils. Especially in her preaching was she supreme. The old eloquence and ardor served her in the later field as in the earlier. There was much that was strange, mysterious, esoteric in her new faith. Theosophy, to the uninitiated, is a curious phantasmagoria of doctrines. But in all and through all and over all her faith was a transcendent spiritual union which lifts her into the true ranks of the prophets. Especially was she moved by a passion for brotherhood, the union of all men in the one spirit of the divine, which made her an immortal advocate of the great cause of human unity. Here she touched the borders of universal religion, and on occasion crossed them to enter the very holy of holies of man's triumphant faith in God.

But for all the change that had come upon her, the old, or rather the young, Annie Besant was not dead. The English iconoclast, Fabian Socialist, strike leader and political rebel found a new incarnation, so to speak, in India, in her identification with the great cause of Indian emancipation from British rule. Nothing is more characteristic, and certainly nothing more glorious, than the emergence of this English woman into the leadership of the Indian people in their struggle for national independence. This episode we count the most remarkable, as we believe it to be the most honorable, of Annie Besant's long, stormy and crowded career.

Two events stand out in her political service of India. One was her election to the presidency of the Indian National Congress. There are few more dramatic moments in modern history than that of the appearance of this Englishwoman before the assembled representatives of an alien people, to lead them in their struggle for freedom from the overlordship of her own country. Nor is there anything quite to match this evidence of Mrs. Besant's consummate capacity for dominance in the affairs of men. The second notable event was her arrest and internment during the World War by the Governor of Madras. Her spiritual convictions, so utterly antithetical to the fratricidal strife of war, coupled with her insistent passion for the larger liberties of the Indian people, led her into constant antagonism to the Crown, and at last to prison. Once again, in the closing as in the opening periods of her life, she was a rebel against the established order.

One might wish, for the sheer sake of drama, if nothing more, that this Englishwoman, now the adopted daughter of Mother India, had maintained her leadership in the National Congress. But other leaders, notably the great Mahatma Gandhi, were now coming to the fore; and other issues, fostered by the increasing intensity of the conflict, led to places where she could not follow. More and more, as time went on, it came to be evident that India's controversy with Britain concerned a complete and final severance of relationships with the Empire. There must be self-government in the sense of full independence of national life! Even India leaders moved slowly to this position—Gandhi with reluctance and regret. But Mrs. Besant could never take such extreme position. To the end she believed that the highest destiny of India was bound up with Great Britain as a union of East and West for the good of all the world, and thus clung to a solution of the problem which would make India free inside rather than outside the Empire. Heroic as ever in fidelity to her own convictions, she refused to keep step with the Congress as it swept on into the terrific conflict precipitated by Gandhi's non-co-operation campaigns, and thus was left behind. She never lost interest in and sympathy for the Indian cause, and to the end fought on for her program of dominion status. But age was upon her, a new generation was now matured in mastery of its own affairs, and her virtual retirement from politics was inevitable. More and more, as the years passed, she found comfort in her work for Theosophy. Almost every year she went to England and Europe; in 1929, she made her last visit to America. Gray-haired and wrinkled, she was still a woman of superb magnetism and power. The old fires leaped to flame, especially on the public platform where her eloquent voice could still stir great audiences to profound emotion. At last travel, even much exertion, became impossible, and in her beloved India she awaited the end. Yet not the end! For to her illumined mind death was but the beginning of new life.

To the problem of life and death (she used to say) there can be only three answers. They are the orthodox Western view of today, that the soul is created new at birth; the modern scientific view that a human life is conditioned by heredity, and the oldest and noblest belief of all: that the soul passes from one life to the next, in an incessant progress toward perfection and unity with the universal spirit. The first two are absurd.

III.

Of Mrs. Besant's sincerity, power, prophetic passion, and heroic sacrifice, there can be no question.

No personality of her period has a clearer title to fame and honor. Yet there remains a problem—the problem of her career! Why did she do the things she did? Especially, why did she go to India midway in her life, breaking the thread of her activity as though all that had gone before were nothing, and she were now living for the first time?

To the Theosophist the explanation is simple. Annie Besant, after years of restless spiritual wandering, found at last the truth in Mme. Blavatsky, and was honest and brave enough to "leave all, and follow."

To the non-Theosophist, the case is not so plain. Thus, it is noted that Mrs. Besant had for years undergone one sudden change after another. She had moved from her early adolescent pieties to rampant atheism, from atheism to scientific agnosticism, from agnosticism to Fabian Socialism. Was she not a curiously unstable person? The Theosophical experience was nothing new—it was only the last of a series of convulsions which reveal an inner disequilibrium which was central in her life. Her psychology, it might be said, was a spiritual earthquake area.

Again, the non-Theosophist would say that, at the time of her meeting with Mme. Blavatsky, Annie Besant was just coming to her "dangerous age." The psychological as well as physical turning-point of her life was in sight, when the need of readjustment stirs not only unrest but also disillusion. There is also the element of fatigue. Mrs. Besant's career had been one of unprecedented exertion and excitement. Her energies were boundless and yet could tire. Unknown to herself, by those subtle processes of the subconscious which betray us, she desired change, relief, a way of escape—and the sudden meeting with Mme. Blavatsky opened the door.

But there is another surmise, perhaps more important. It is the fact that, for all her own magnetic and transcendent capacity for leadership, Mrs. Besant seems to have been by nature essentially a *disciple.* She must have some master to espouse, defend, vindicate! This was a curious slant of her inner life—this passion of fidelity to one greater than herself, this yearning, in one so independent and heroic, for some one to look up to and adore! Certain it is that she passed from the mastery of one dominant personality after another—Charles Bradlaugh, Dr. Aveling, Bernard Shaw, Mme. Blavatsky. When, in her declining years, she was herself supreme, the master of her own world, the longing for dependence seemed still to endure—and there came that curious episode of Krishnamutri, created and reverenced by Mrs. Besant, to his own embarrassment, as "the forerunner of the new Messiah," "the vehicle for a world teacher."

Whatever the sincerity of Mrs. Besant, and whatever the truth of Theosophy, there remains a problem here which only the psychologists can work out. I venture to say that when all the documents are available, all the facts known, Mrs. Besant's life will be found to present one of the most fascinating biographical studies of all time. Meanwhile, there remains this great and splendid woman, and her career blazing its way across the dark firmament of East and West. Whatever the mysteries of her inner life, there was a planetary splendor about her, which poured luster upon the world. If, as she so firmly believed, her soul has mounted to some higher circle of incarnation, then watchers in this spirit realm must be gazing in awe as this

". . . new planet swims into their ken."

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

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## Annie Besant—The Servant of India

To tell the full story of Dr. Besant's work for India is to recite the history of nearly half a century of intense political and social activity—a task impossible in the short space at my disposal. Briefly, it may truthfully be said that but for Dr. Besant's initiative and leadership, the National Movement in India would never have attained the powerful impetus that marks its career today. Apart from her personal inspiration that has so strongly influenced many of the present leaders of the *Swaraj* movement, her service of India has been marked by a well-defined plan.

In her earliest years in India she strove to restore national self-respect in the field of religious thought. Her efforts were successful in reviving the dying embers of India's ancient faiths, until they flamed across the world as an undying contribution to the religious consciousness of mankind. Following this work, there came her important activities in the educational sphere, including the establishment of the Central Hindu College, later to blossom into the National Hindu University at Benares, which bestowed upon her the degree of D. Litt. *in honoris causa.* Educationally, her influence has been widely felt in counteracting the denationalizing and materialistic tendencies of a purely Western system of pedagogy. In this connection she has been instrumental also in bringing the invaluable aid of the women of India to national regeneration, as witness the Women's Indian Association, of which she is the Honorable President. Succeeding her work for education, there followed her efforts towards a true Indian Social Reform, as for instance, in her campaign against child marriage and for village uplift. Finally, we witness her entry into the purely political field, in the formation of the National Home Rule League before the War, the drafting by the National Convention of the first Dominion Constitution for British India—the Commonwealth of India Bill—introduced into the House of Commons in 1921, and the establishment and editorship of India's International Weekly, *New India.* In all her Indian work she has sought to keep India in the British Commonwealth of Nations on terms of freedom and equality.

As she has so often said: "The price of India's loyalty is India's freedom."

In all her powerful activities in these four main regions of a nation's life and well being, Dr. Besant has displayed a statesmanship of the highest order. In her we see that rarest of combinations—the Occultist who is at the same time the eminently practical and efficient worker in all that concerns the welfare of the world.

BASIL P. HOWELL.

## Annie Besant's Last Days

On the shore of a beautiful river where it gives its water to the sea, there stands a far famed building, all colored in red and white. To the left and to the right, in between and around, even in the distance beyond, are great tropical trees, colorful shrubs and potted plants. The upper and lower verandahs of this building overlook the river with such intimate nearness as to seem like the decks of a ship to one who may be seated thereon. Today, upon the upper of these there sits a venerable personage, a woman, very old in body, and oh! so very old in wisdom. Her hair is snow white, as it should be. There she sits, or reclines, all day long and day after day—or it may be just a few steps indoors—reading a little, sleeping a little, and eating a little, and occasionally writing a line or so.

A devotee of many a former day is always near. She moves here and there all day long and day after day, administering to even the least of the needs of this silent, striking woman. Occasionally an intimate colleague, charged with many of the responsibilities which she can no longer fulfil, looks in to see if aught can be done, or perhaps to share her tea, or to keep watch while the other takes an hour's freedom. In the evening comes the wise and faithful physician with that certainty which marks the setting of the sun.

And so go the days.

But this great woman has not always kept such silence. Time was when her voice and pen stirred peoples over vast areas and made governments tremble. Yet, for the moment, that pen is still and that voice is silent save as soft words may be spoken to the loving friends who quietly come and go as the hours slowly pass.

What does this mean—this arrested power? It is that behind and beyond, in the world's unseen, where things ever begin which we ultimately see down here and where dwells the Self or Soul, a greater freedom is needed—a freedom that will in time yield larger results than if lessened by the focus in this lesser world where hampering forces reign? It may well be so. In any case, all is well and is working out, one believes, according to an ordered plan.

Even so, what more fitting than that the autumn of a glorious life should be passed in the beauty and stillness of peace before the birth into realms where peace is the power of the life supernal? Bow low, Oh reverent soul, for one of earth's great ones pauses near the close of a rich and beautiful life to do *puja* ere passing through the portal of Light.

—*A. P. Warrington.*

*Theosophy in India*

## Mrs. Besant's Faith

[The following was written by Dr. Besant as a Foreword to her book "India Bond or Free," but was not included in the book. It gives in a brief terse form the belief, or "partial knowledge," which underlay her political work for India, through all its vicissitudes.—EDITOR.]

### FOREWORD

I think that I ought to state here the belief, or rather, the partial knowledge, which underlies all the opinions expressed in this book.

I believe in the Universal life, "One without a second," manifesting as the great Architect of the Universe, the Logos, the Emanator, Preserver and Regenerator of our universe.

I believe in an Inner Government of our own world, the Occult Hierarchy, composed of the Company of just men made perfect, the Rishis of the Hindus and Buddhists, the Saints of the Christians, the great Prophets of the Hebrews and Muslims, who are within the reach of men, who, assisted by a great host of Sevas, Archangels, and angels and Nature Spirits, guide and help upward sub-human and human evolution from the simple to the complex, from nescience to knowledge, from imperfection to relative perfection, within the inviolable laws of Nature, which express the conditions of the manifestation of the Universal Life through the Great Architect of our Universe.

This belief is not argued for, nor even stated save as above, in this book, but it underlies, colors my view of all the subjects herein dealt with. It makes the atmosphere in which I live, in which the book is written. To me, India and Great Britain have been brought into their unique relationship by this Inner Government for the benefit of the world at large. This explains what has been called my "incurable optimism," it creates for me a "silver lining to every cloud."

ANNIE BESANT.

### To Annie Besant

Prophet, wise teacher, ever-shining lamp,
Theosophist inspirer of a world,
Accept this tribute from another camp,
Whence dialectic darts so oft are hurled.

I love free thought and many things you fight,
I fight your faith and many things you love,
Yet on one salient object we unite:
That Truth we ne'er must place a creed above.

For nearly forty years your star has led,
Inspiring me to paths you have not trod;
One of the millions whom your soul has fed
With love of man—mayhap you call it God!

Greetings from your materialistic friends;
There lives not one who does not love you still.
Here now, and when your mortal journey ends,
You have and always will have our goodwill.

*New India.* —*George Bedborough.*

# Religion*

By Annie Besant

What is the position of the religious world today?

First of all, there have been working in it now for many long years certain forces undermining the religion of the time; and when I speak now of religion, I mean the religion of the West, for I am speaking in the West, although I might show you that in other parts of the world as well the same forces are at work, though not quite so prominently, and have brought about there to some extent the same results.

First, as you know well, the undermining which has been done by scholarship in Christendom, in which what is called the higher criticism has been tearing to pieces the documents on which historical Christianity has been built up—taking one after another, examining, studying, scrutinizing, comparing one kind of language with another kind in the same document; pointing out marks of different ages where a single writer was supposed to have been speaking, and gradually collecting from all sides different readings, placing them side by side, and finding them to a very great extent mutually destructive. So far has that gone, as you know, that the whole of this line of investigation was condemned by the authoritative head of the great Roman Catholic commission.

The higher criticism, the historical dealings with church teaching and church history, the analyzing, scrutinizing, investigating spirit of our own time—the whole of that, with all its results, has been condemned and forbidden to be taught within the teaching establishments of the great Roman communion; the results of historical criticism have been banned, and most fatal of all policies, kept largely out of the knowledge of those who are to become the teachers of the generations that are to be born. Is there any wonder, if you look at it only from the outside point?

For where religion is a matter of authority, of books, of successions, of historical events, there criticism must always destroy; the form changes, and cannot remain stable in a transitory world, and we find the ancient documents shorn of their ancient value; we find inspiration, limited and fettered to *words,* instead of the spirit, failing to hold its own against the critical scholarship of the day.

One defence after another is thrown up, only to be abandoned before the approaching tide, as children throw up castles in the sand, dreaming that sand castles can stop the flow of waves.

You know on every side questions have arisen in regard to documents; most disheartening and discouraging if religion were a matter of books and words, and not a matter of the living and divine spirit in man, which no criticism is able to destroy.

Then, if you turn to another destructive force that has been undermining popular religion, you find it in archaeological research; you find it in what is called comparative mythology, built up out of the results of that research; unburied cities, unburied libraries, unburied tombs—they have all given up their long hidden secrets, and those secrets have been used as weapons against the religion of the West.

Dates have been thrown overboard, hundreds of years have been lengthened into millions; archaeology, geology, antiquarianism of every kind, researches into long-dead races have all given the same result, shaking the very foundation on which it was thought, however wrongly, that religion must be built.

Out of all this undermining, this destruction, from the continuously critical spirit of man, have arisen doubt and question and half-skepticism, and only a hope instead of a knowledge, only an aspiration instead of a living faith. And beyond those minor questions of religion which can be touched by this kind of destructive criticism, beyond and above those, the central ideas of religion have been thrown into the crucible of reason.

The idea of God himself has been under discussion, argued about, reasoned about, and the conception of God has changed.

Who now dreams of troubling himself about Butler's "Analogy"? Who now would spend his time poring over Paley's "Evidence"? These are out of date, and they do not deal with the questions of the time; for the thought of Evolution has affected religion, and the central conception of deity has not been able to escape the corrosion of that atmosphere of thought. Here, again, outward demonstrations are failing, outward reasonings fail to satisfy.

Reason, though piled upon reason, can give no more than a reasonable probability, so long as you watch for God only in the outer world, and not in his highest manifestation, the spirit which lives in yourself.

The idea of an extra cosmic God is gradually disappearing from the world of thought. The idea of a God who made the universe as a piece of machinery, and stood outside it while the wheels were turning and the bands were working—that idea has almost passed away, and instead of that—A God immanent in everything, a God who is a life and not a mechanician, a God who is an informing Spirit and not an outside creator—that nobler, more exquisite idea is dawning on the religious world today.

But still, to see him only immanent in the universe, that is not the final answer of religion; there is something more that is needed than the God who is found within the universe and within man—that mighty truth which is spoken out in an Eastern scripture: "I established this universe with a portion of myself and I remain."

Along another of the great Christian concepts there is much of trouble and of difficulty today. If you pass from religion proper, as we may say, to the great domain of morals which is so closely bound up with it, see how difficult is the position at the present time.

In London, not long ago, you have had a Moral Education Congress, in which no less than twenty-two of the European Governments sent their best representatives. Intense interest was felt in the question of education as part of religion or apart from it.

It is one of the most serious social questions of the day, one which society must answer. Shall morals be based on religion and sanctioned by religion, or can they find standing ground apart from, separate from it?

Now the popular answer of the day is rather in

*Written in 1909.—Editor.

favor of the second—that morals should find an independent ground apart from the sanction of religion, and that is not unnatural, because the quarrels of religious bodies, their disputes over the question of education, have practically wearied people's minds, and men and women get impatient with the struggles over trivialities where the moral training of tens of thousands of boys and girls, the future citizens of the country, is concerned.

If you take that Moral Education Congress, the point was put very strongly and very plainly. I quote from a brief article in the Hibbert Journal, speaking of the relation of education to religion and the writer speaks of one remarkable speech at the Education Congress, in which it was declared that while children should be taught "the respect due to the idea of religion, they are to be taught that the chief mode of honoring God consists in each doing his duty according to his conscience and his reason."

Now—that is a statement that would find very wide acceptance at the present time, and yet its value or lack of value depends on two words, "conscience" and "reason."

If the conscience be unenlightened, there will be very little useful service done to man by the boys and girls who follow that conscience as men and women.

The enlightened conscience is truly the foundation of a State, but the unenlightened conscience may lead men into every kind of crime.

The inquisitor followed his conscience when he racked the heretic and sent him to the stake.

Laud followed his conscience when he persecuted, tortured, mutilated Puritans who would not bow before him.

Conscience has committed the greatest crimes against nations and against individuals; conscience must be enlightened before it is a safe guide.

And so also with reason. If the reason is developed, illuminated, cultured, trained, that reason might indeed be followed along the path of life; but a reason that is not exercised according to the laws of logic and right thinking may be as irrational as though the name of reason were not applied to it.

It is not enough to teach that men should follow conscience and reason unless you train the reason and illuminate the conscience.

Now, how is that to be done? It has been done in the past by religion to a very great extent. Can society afford to try to teach morals apart from religion? Can you effectively teach the child morals without falling back upon religion?

You can teach a child to be prudent, thrifty, cautious; you can teach him the value of acquisitiveness, and the duty of providing for the future. All that kind of virtue you may be able to teach on a purely utilitarian ground, as it is called, but, as is again pointed out in a remarkably able article on "The Social Conscience of the Future" certain old-fashioned traits, once considered to be virtues are now commonly accounted to men for vices.

Non-resistance, for example, "is now considered cowardice; meekness today is usually spelt weakness; taking no thought for the morrow is known as improvidence: unworldliness is generally viewed as a phase of sentimentality."

That is all quite true. But how are you going to teach the virtues that hitherto have been rooted in religion—virtues without which no state can endure? For you cannot teach the civic virtues on a basis of enlightened selfishness. That is a point that all educators of the young must remember.

Self-sacrifice, compassion, the willingness to endure for the sake of others, the taking of the burden of the weak on the shoulders that are strong, the realization that duty is greater than rights, and responsibility more vital than self-protection. How are you going to teach those virtues on the basis of selfishness?

Now in the days when I was a skeptic, I tried to show that you might train people to self-sacrifice and self-surrender by an appeal to the humanity within them, and the sense of duty to the race; but that appeal fails the most readily in the cases where the virtues are most required.

It appeals to the noble, but the majority are not noble; it appeals to the unselfish and the heroic, but the majority are of mediocre courage and of very limited unselfishness; it appeals to those who do not need it, and it leaves cold and unmoved those who need it most.

Will you go to the millionaire who has built up his vast fortune by the ruin of hundreds of families, and speak to him of the beauty of self-sacrifice and the splendor of self-surrender? The answer of people of the selfish type is: "Why should I sacrifice myself for the future?" or, as the witty Frenchman put it: "What has posterity done for me that I should sacrifice myself for posterity?" You may say that is very mean, very selfish. It is; but then, those are the people who want the compulsory force of moral strength applied to them. Where are you going to find it?

For without self-sacrifice, no society is secure; without self-surrender of the small to the great, of the individual to the social self, there is no possibility of national life, no stability in the social system; and those are virtues that grow out of religion, not out of what is falsely called utility.

The greatest utility for the nation is that which understands the relationship between the part and the whole, and that is only taught by this kind of religion:

The religion which knows the larger Self,
Which knits man to the whole,
Makes him realize relationships,
Makes him know he is not a creature of one little globe, but a creature of the universe;
That he is a cosmic life, and not a planetary.

That is learned by religion only, and by the deathless immortality of the divine spirit in man; without that, no morality will endure; and you will make a fatal blunder if, because of the passing follies of religionists, you throw religion out of its place in education, of which it is the inspiration and the strength.

You want a new religious and moral synthesis; and you cannot find that without the higher inspiration for which man is groping now. The nature of God, the consciousness of his presence everywhere, the recognition of his life as an indwelling power—all these will become fundamental realities for the unfolding Spirit in man.

No amount of reasons addressed to the intellect could ever lead us to an absolute demonstration of the existence, the reality of God. Probability, yes; cumulative evidence, yes; but demonstration, no. When a

thing is once demonstrated, no further challenge arises about it; when once a fact is demonstrated, no one any longer asks: Does that fact exist? We have been in the region of arguments about God, and not of that spiritual knowledge of God which is eternal life.

How is that to be reached?

Not by any effort of the reasoning intelligence, nor by any upreaching of the merely emotional nature, but by the unfolding in man himself of that spirit which is divine in its essential quality, which, because itself divine, can respond to divinity without, and because itself is God, knows that God of which it is the offspring.

This is the ultimate truth of religion, the human experience of communion with God in the depths of the human Spirit; for religion is only a groping after God, a search after God,—ceremonies and rites, churches and scriptures, they are all external; they can never reveal God to the Spirit, which is of his own likeness and image.

Only the Spirit can know him, only the Spirit can find him; while it searches through matter it can only hope he is, but the unveiled Spirit can feel the unveiled Godhead, and by the identity of nature can know that God is, and is itself.

And as this inner spiritual life more and more awakens in the religions of the world, man will know the truth of that great saying of the Christ: "The Kingdom of God is within you."

As you go down into the depths of your own being, there shall you find deity, the conviction that God is and must be.

For you can strip away from yourself everything that is not he, until only he, the one self of all, remains. You can mutilate your body and lose your limbs, but *you* remain. Your emotions can grow worn out and be withered, but behind your emotions *you* are stilll there. Your mind may grow weaker, feebler, may become, as it were, paralyzed for reasoning, and *you* are there, behind the failing mind; and if you are willing to pass on into spiritual experience, to let your emotions be quieted, to let your mind be still, then in the silence of the emotions, in the tranquility of the mind, you shall find a deeper consciousness, a deeper life, a more real individuality; and as the emotions are still and the mind is silent, in the innermost depths of the Spirit you shall find yourself and God. Then, contemplating that mighty and eternal life, you shall feel that you share it, that you are part of it, that you cannot be separated from it, and in a great gush of experience that never again you can doubt, you shall know the reality of Deity in finding the reality of yourself.

This is the ultimate conviction that nothing can shake—that the human experience that many a man has had, that for him has transformed the world; that is the sure ground of the religion of the future, that—the rock on which a true faith alone can be based; and it is truly written in an ancient scripture, that the only proof of God lies in the witness of the self.

On that rock religion will base itself, fearless of all attack, of all assault.

No question of chronology can move it, for every man can gain that experience for himself;

No criticism and destruction of scriptures can tear this to pieces, for it is ever renewing in the perennial life of the Eternal Spirit;

No churches, in failing, can shake it, for it is this that made churches, to help in its own searching;

Nothing outside can touch it, for it lives in the innermost heart of man.

And in that, ever-opening new experiences, fuller knowledge, deeper understanding, more abounding love, and unchanging peace and bliss.

Everything else may go, but this remains unchanging; and as out of this all has come, the perishing of the transient matters not, for the *eternal source* remains.

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# The Place of Religion in National Life

**By Annie Besant**

If I tried to say what is the place of religion in national life, and if I answered or defined that position, I should certainly say that its place is everywhere. No religion is a true religion unless it permeates the whole life of a man, and a nation cannot be called religious unless it be inspired in the whole of its activities by religious feeling, religious thought, religious action. I want, if I can, to try to show you to some extent not only the necessity of religion in the life of a nation, but also something of what history has taught us of the effect of religion on national life. Some of you may remember reading, with relation to the want of religion, a rather interesting, because a very significant, sentence of a great writer: "The times of atheism have always been civil times"—times of peace, times with small excitement, times in which the life of a nation was running smoothly though perhaps somewhat sluggishly; for if we look widely at history, we shall see that, when a nation has become very wealthy, very prosperous, very luxurious, then the intellectual and the spiritual elements in that nation tend to become overborne by the physical and the material, and so we notice in history that those "civil times" of which Bacon spoke, and which, he said, were characteristic of atheistic thought, have been times followed very shortly by national decay.

Nations growing over-wealthy and over-luxurious tend to lose acuteness of intellect, and still more to lose the keenness of spiritual insight. It has always been said by the great religious teachers of mankind that it is necessary for spiritual progress that a man should be self-controlled, that he should be abstemious as regards the luxuries of life, that he should be master of his body, and not permit his body to be master of mind and spirit. There is always a danger when things go too easily with a nation. As a poet once said, "when wealth accummulates, men decay."

We find, looking at religion, that it is essentially an aspiration to the higher self. The essence of religion, that which is common to all religions, is the aspiration of the heart towards God, the searching for God and God's answer to the searching. Looking

at human nature, we find that the thirst for God, as one great Hebrew writer called it, is an integral part of the human constitution.

Many people, mistaking what religion means and seeing the quarrels, the controversies, the hatreds, the strifes that have risen out of it, say that we should be better without religion, and that we should throw religion aside, for it breeds mischief, dissension, quarrel and hatred. But it is useless to say to mankind: "Throw religion aside." Man is so constituted in his inner nature that there is an inextinguishable thirst within him which nothing but the knowledge of God can satisfy. For a time, it may be, especially in youth, he is easily satisfied with the outer things of life, but when the difficulties of life have to be met, when the laws of life are experienced, when sorrow wrings the heart and disappointment breaks the courage, then it is that in man awakens the thirst for God, and it was truly said by Saint Augustine that "man can never find rest until he finds rest in Thee." That was once put very beautifully by an English poet, George Herbert, who was mystic in his thought, quaint in his poetry. He put his thought long after Saint Augustine, and he threw it into poetical form:

When God at first made Man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by;
Let us (said He) pour on him all we can—
Let the world's riches, which dispersed lie,
Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way;
Then beauty flow'd, then wisdom, honor, pleasure.
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that alone, of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay;

For if I should (said He)
Bestow this jewel also on My creature,
He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature,
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to My breast.

The thought there is at once beautiful and true. Man's progress is made by disappointments. Just as a mother coaxes a child to walk by holding up some glittering object so that the child strives to crawl and then walk to reach it, so does God play with his children. God dangles in front of them some shining object. "Come," he practically says, "and take this toy," and the child strives after it and exerts its strength in striving; it is wealth, or power, or fame, or pleasure; but whatever it is, the only value of it is in the effort to reach it, and not in the holding after it is won. A man becomes wealthy, but his wealth burdens him; he finds pleasure, but pleasure cloys him; he grasps power, and he finds his pillow full of thorns; he seeks satisfaction in one thing after another, and everything breaks to pieces in his hands, and turns, like the fruit of that fabled tree in Milton's hell, into ashes in his mouth; and then at last, after many disappointments, having gained value of the striving in the development of his mind and in the power of his emotions, then at last, wearied with all worldly toys, he turns to God alone, and finding in the divinity within him the power to answer to the divinity without, then and then only is his aspiration satisfied, and he finds his rest in Him who is verily himself. And so all the great struggles of man, whatever they may be, are really struggles to find Brahman, who is bliss. He seeks happiness; he does well; it is a true instinct although his methods are mistaken; inasmuch as the very heart of the universe is love and joy, inasmuch as God is love and God is bliss, that yearning after happiness felt by every child of man is really an aspiration after God; that is an impulse to progress, that is a spur to all true endeavor; and so the very essence of religion is the motive power of evolution, and a nation, as well as an individual, can only progress by the power of the spirit within. That is true of religion as a whole. Any special religion has its value in its partaking of that aspiration after God. If you take the separate religions, then you will find that in a nation's life, the religion by which the nation has been built up stamps its civilization and guides its polity.

Look over the great religions of the world, as we have known them in the so-called historical times, and you will find that each type of civilization differs as the religion on which that civilization is built gradually shapes and moulds it to its own likeness. If you take Hinduism, the oldest of the Aryan religions, you find that the whole of the Hindū polity is built up on its religion. The whole of the mighty civilization of the past is the outcome of its religion. You have not only the Vedas and the Upanishads, showing a mighty intellect and giving you a splendid philosophy, a marvellous spirituality; you have also a set of books that you know as the Dharma Shāstras, the law which lays down the conduct of the people and gives a definite line of evolution which the people should follow. Similarly, you find that side by said, penetrated with the religion, you have the knowledge, the science of the old Hindūs. You find that within the six great Darshanas, and four of them are practically given to science. If you take Sānkhya, Paxtañjali, Nyāya, Vyākarana, what have you there but science of the deepest and the most splendid description? You find in those conceptions of Sānkhya, conceptions of modern science precisely, definitely and accurately voiced, with a depth of understanding, of power, of abstract thought that has never been outdone in the modern world. You find the very foundations of modern science laid down there as part of the philosophy of Hindū antiquity.

Of all philosophy, the ancient Hindū told us that all philosophy has for its end to put an end to pain. Ask any of the great philosophies what is its object? "To put an end to pain," is the answer; and then there comes another significant verse, that you might as well try to roll up the ākāsha like leather as to give happiness to man without the knowledge of God. So you find that, whether in philosophy or in science, this mighty Hindū religion has moulded Indian life, has inspired Indian thought, has stimulated Indian action. Some of the other books dealt with the constitution of States, with the relation of the citizens to the State, and shaped and moulded the lives of the people; and I do not know that anywhere, in the ancient or modern world, you will find a single religion that so touches human life at every point as Hinduism has done, whether in the conduct of the individual or as shaping the larger life of the nation. In Hinduism—in the religion of the Hebrews—you will find that all that was wanted to make the life of

the people healthy and happy came to them with the authority of religion. You know how often the laws of sanitation, of hygiene, of cleanliness, of being scrupulously careful with water, with food, and with drink, and so on, come in as part of the religious duty of man. It was the same with the Hebrews.

In the laws of Moses, meant for the guidance of the Hebrew nation, are laid down particulars of the daily life of the people that may often remind one of the laws laid down by the great Hindū teachers. To a man of the ancient day, there was no division in life between religion and the whole life of man. If he was healthy, his religion taught him how to become healthy. If his town was sanitary and well looked after, he was obeying the precepts of his religion that came to him with that external authority. The difficulty in reading the Mosaic books is that they are mixed up with crudities, because the Jewish nation was not in those early days a highly educated nor an artistic nation. We come across phrases so curious, and occasional comments so immoral, that we are apt to overlook the value of the other parts of the Mosaic teachings. There are some absurd statements, some immoral statements as regards women; others made a duty of persecution; if a man did not follow the law of the Hebrew deity, then he was to be slain. Those are blots that belong rather to the nature of the people, I think, than to the teachings of their prophet. All ancient books are subject to that difficulty. You must use intelligence in reading them, and you must learn to discriminate between the words of the Sage and that which is very often the gloss of a later commentator who, in order to serve the purpose of the moment, wrote into the original manuscript something which was useful for the time, as he thought, but was utterly out of accord with the ancient teaching that he injured and lowered in the minds of the thoughtful. You may turn from Hinduism and take other religions which, one after another, had a national life based upon them. The second great religion that followed on Hinduism, going further west along the border of the Mediterranean, in Egypt, Cyprus, etc., was a religion peculiarly scientific in its nature. The Egyptian religion was based on the knowledge of the physical world and of the physical body of man. They studied the body of man in relation to the body of the universe, and found out the relations between the parts of the human body and the larger parts of the great organism of the solar system. It almost seems as though Hinduism were the parent religion of the religions of the West, as the Aryan ethnological stock is the parent of all the emigrations that went out westward. We find in that Mediterranean and Egyptian civilization one more type of civilization moulded entirely by the religion of the people. We find the science that made the precision of Egypt the marvel of the world, and made their priests able to perform so-called miracles, which were simply the utilization of some of the generally unknown laws of nature to produce results which, as it were, convinced the ignorant, not by appealing to the mind, but by dazzling the senses.

When we turn from that to the better known civilization of Persia, we find there in the religion of Zoroaster the essential characteristic of purity underlying everything, a civilization largely based on agriculture, on cultivation of land, and side by side with that, a similar development of astronomy and astrology, so that all agricultural operations, as is also seen in India, were arranged on astrological calculations, and the beginnings of every great season of the year were marked by festivals of the planets, the sun and the moon. Right through that civilization this idea of purity runs, and of the relation between the planetary bodies and man. You must be pure in thought, in word, in deed. You must be pure as far as your houses are concerned, as far as your towns are concerned, as far as your rivers are concerned. No Zoroastrian would have allowed rivers to be polluted, as they are polluted today in England by factories that pour all refuse into them and make them sources of poison instead of sources of health. Everywhere the law of purity ruled in that ancient Persia, with the result of a splendid, healthy, virile people, a long-lived nation, because they obeyed the religious law which, carried out in life, gives health, strength and vigor.

When we come to the next great civilization and its religion, we come into an entirely different atmosphere. It was the religion and civilization of Greece. There the key-note was beauty; not spirituality of thought as in Hinduism, not knowledge of science as in Egypt, not purity of life as in Persia, but beauty of life. When we think of Greece we always think of beauty. The most exquisite buildings come from her architecture. The grandest statues are imitations of her sculpture. The whole education of the Greeks was an education in beauty. The results of that on the life of the nation were striking. The Greeks were surrounded by objects of beauty. Their city was full of architecture, the streets were the decorations of the capital. The Greek was the nation of the most beautiful forms of humanity, because of the influence of beauty on the mind and the life of the people. Everything that the Greek used was artistic; his domestic vessels, his lamps, the things in which he carried water or cooked food were all beautiful, and the result of that was that the people were beautiful. The mother, surrounded with lovely objects, gave birth to children moulded into harmony and beauty by the beauty that surrounded her. That was the great teaching of Greece—the value of beauty in human life, and not only in outer objects created by the artist but in the beauty of language used by the poet, by the dramatist, by the philosopher. The form side of life had its perfection in Greece, and the whole religion of Greece was a religion of beauty which shaped the type of its civilization.

That was succeeded in Rome by Christianity; an entirely different civilization grew up as the life of the nations of Europe. If you seek what was wanting in the elder days, you will find that what was left out was the sense of the value of the individual. The doctrines of Christianity have lost very much that belonged to the other religions of the world. The earlier Christianity lost the great doctrine of reincarnation, and so there was a danger of its losing the doctrine of immortality, though men clung to it against all reason and argument by the intuition that saved it. But you find in the history of Christendom that it is man's own soul that is the supreme matter of importance.

There grew up a strong individuality. There is no use in objecting to a fact of that kind which is necessary for human evolution. It was necessary to

have a strong individual, and that could only be developed by effort. You have in Christendom a civilization, not only individualistic but combative, one man striving against another, every man fighting for his own hand. It is not only a question of physical war; but it is a question of social war, it is a question of class war, and you do not find all those wars developed anywhere as you find them developed in Christendom—evil you may be inclined to think, short-sightedly—but it is not. It is working to a greater good. The example of Christ was sure in the long run to correct this necessary fault in the Christian teaching, not found in himself but found in his apostles. You must remember that Christianity was made by Saint Paul far more than it was made by Christ himself. It was Saint Paul who gave a dogmatic side to Christianity and made religion into a Church—a very, very different thing. Gradually, however, it was inevitable that the example of Christ should correct the faults of the civilization by the example of true self-sacrifice. You have that corrective in the teaching as well as the example of Christ.

"He that is greatest is he that doth serve." "Behold," he told his apostles, "I am among you as he that serveth." Out of that came gradually the idea that strength was made for service and not for oppression, and that which we call in Christendom public spirit, patriotism, love of country, altruism—all these were virtues that flowered out of that competitive system which had developed the strength necessary for the next step forward in human life; and strength linked to service is the ultimate lesson of Christianity.

Looking at that long past, then, of these great religions, we see one other had to be added—the religion of the great Prophet of Arabia; and it is there again profoundly interesting to see how that religion corrected some of the faults of the religion of Christianity, and brought to Europe what had been lost by the lack of knowledge in the churches. Two marked characteristics there are in the religion of the great Prophet of Arabia. We see how it came out in the life of the Prophet himself, courageous beyond the courage of man, calm and strong in the midst of uttermost peril, able to stand alone, convinced that he was not alone, for God was with him. On the other side, there was knowledge, intellect and science highly developed. It was the Prophet himself that said, you may remember: "The pen of the scholar is greater than the blood of the martyr." But for him so many men had died; for him so many of his followers had been murdered—he who inspired love so passionate that when one of his followers had been tortured for hours and hours, his eyelids cut off, his whole body made into a mass of gaping wounds, and his torturer turned to him and said: "Do you not wish that your Prophet was in your place?" "No," he said, "by God, I would rather suffer ten times the tortures, than that the Prophet of God should be pierced by a single thorn." Such love was felt by his first disciples to that wonderful founder of Islām. We find in a religion such as that the dual note of the Prophet—the power of the conqueror, the power of the sword on one side; a military civilization; the teacher of science on the other. It was Islām that brought back science to Europe. It was the followers of the Crescent, when they conquered Spain, who brought science from the Greeks, which they had gathered up in the later days from the neo-Platonic schools; and then under the guidance of the son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad they founded great schools in Arabia that grew into Universities, and in a hundred years made the followers of the Prophet life-bringers to the western world. There you have the shaping of a nation's life by religion. Warriors and scientists—those are the two marks of Muhammadan civilization.

So looking over all these we find in these different religions that each moulds the life of its own nation, and that the spirit of the religion shapes the body of the national life.

It is clear that as the outer ways are different, the outer customs are different, the outer dogmas are different, we must look to the uniting power of the religions in the spirit of religion more than in the outer forms.

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## The Father of Modern India

The mists lie on the fields of the English countryside, like filmy silver gauze in the autumn moonlight. A stately country house stands out distinctly against the dark elms. The air is fragrant and calm, full of the sweet mystery of the night. Inside the house an extraordinary man lies dying. His skin is dark. Proud Britons have called him a "black man" and a "nigger," but his blood is of the noblest Aryan strain. Over the left shoulder and under the right arm passes something that looks like a skein of common brown thread. It is the mark of the highest Hindu caste. He is a Brahman. Far from the sacred waters of his own Ganges, he lies here beneath these northern skies. An adopted son holds his hand, a few friends of an alien race sit beside his bed. The night wears on. His breathing becomes more difficult, his pulse imperceptible. He murmurs the sacred syllable "Aum." A little later, early in the morning, he breathes his last. From the peace of that moonlight night his spirit passes on into the Eternal Calm.

The suburbs of Bristol, England, September 27, 1833. A hundred years ago! And this autumn all over India, in England and America, the centenary of that death is remembered in commemorative celebrations.

We in America have not known much of Rammohun Roy. A few in liberal circles have heard his name, strange name, as the founder of the Brahmo Somaj, and have promptly forgotten it again. That name ought not to be forgotten, for it is the name of the father of modern India, the man who was to the religious life of India what Channing was to the religious life of America, the man who was to the cause of freedom in his country what Lincoln was in ours. He was to the early 19th century in India what Gandhi is to the early 20th. In the words of his English biographer he "stands in history as the living bridge over which India marches from her unmeasured past to her incalculable future,—who leads the way,—not to, but through Western culture, towards a civilization

which is neither Western nor Eastern, but something vastly larger and nobler than both."

Says Rabindranath Tagore:

Rammohun was the only person in his time, in the whole world of man, to realize completely the significance of the Modern Age. He knew that the ideal of human civilization does not lie in the isolation of independence, but in the brotherhood of inter-dependence of individuals as well as of nations in all spheres of thought and activity.

We thought we had learned that lesson. The sentiment had become a commonplace on our lips, but today when self-centered and self-contained nationalism is rampant again, we need to remind ourselves of this ideal.

We now live in a world where the principle of international interdependence is forgotten or flouted or denied. We have only to think of Russia defiantly pursuing her great experiment in the face of the world's hostility; of Italy embarked upon her course of proud nationalism; of Japan forfeiting the esteem of the nations and successfully emerging from her adventure in militarism; of Germany recklessly scorning disapproval and surrounded by a ring of enemies; of the United States seriously considering today the wisdom of living for itself and unto itself alone. In such a time as this religion has a work of crying importance to undertake. It must see to it that no matter what happens on the low levels of commodities and exchange, the bonds that tie us together on the higher levels of racial and national understanding, of ethical and spiritual idealism shall not be sundered, so far as it is within its power to prevent. We may well remember Rammohun Roy, the Great Unifier, who paved the path for the brotherhood of man.

Rammohun was born in a moment of darkness and decay. Following the brilliant creative days of early Indian history, the days of the Vedas, the Upanishads, the epics, the philosophers, there came a long period of decline, of stagnation, of superstition, of degradation. No single great voice was heard for centuries. The fountain of inspiration was clogged and sterile. Social degeneration and blind idolatry were prevalent. It was a day of scribes and pharisees, when the letter was supreme over the spirit, when outward ceremonials had taken the place of inner righteousness. Justice was dead. Personal purity in men was not necessary. Men could marry any number of wives at once or in succession, but women were not allowed to marry again, if their husbands should die. Even little girls of five or six, losing the husband of their child-marriage, had to drag out a miserable life, or be burned alive on their husbands' funeral pyres. In some places the female children were killed. In others the first born were thrown into the rivers to propitiate the gods.

Into this dark period Rammohun was born. When he died he had inaugurated a new age. I can do no more than suggest a few of the ways in which the new age was the product of his vision and his indomitable and sacrificial energy. For his contribution to it he paid a high price. He won the enmity of the orthodox, both Hindu and Christian. The champions of the ancient customs fought him bitterly. He was early estranged from his own family.

The young lad was sent away to study Persian and Arabic, the passports to preferment in those days. He became acquainted with the writings of the most enlightened Mohammedan philosophers, and his eyes were opened to the errors of Hindu idolatry. He returned to his home, still but a boy of sixteen. His father observed that he spent much time day after day writing something. Secretly the father read the writing, a treatise on the superstitions and idolatries of his ancestral faith. The result was that the father ordered the boy from his home. Thereupon the boy traveled by foot several thousands of miles, crossed the Himalayas and went to Thibet for the purpose of studying Buddhism. There again he incurred the displeasure of the Lama-worshippers by his protests against their idolatry. Only the kindness of some Thibetan women saved his life.

Upon his return he settled down at Benares to study Sanskrit and the sacred literature of the Hindus. His father died, then his elder brother, and Rammohun inherited the paternal estates.

He was by this time well embarked upon his career as a religious teacher and reformer. He founded a society for the promotion of free discussion on religious subjects and for the dissemination of truth. He translated the Upanishads from the Sanskrit into the Bengalee, because he believed that the pure monotheism of these writings would go far to correct the popular religion of his day. The publication of the Upanishads brought down upon him a torrent of abuse. Many of his followers deserted him and he was left almost alone. But his courage never failed him.

Then in the year 1820 he surprised friends and foes alike by translating and publishing a little book which he called "The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness." He believed that the doctrines of Christ were more conducive to moral principles and more adapted for the use of rational beings than any other which had come to his knowledge.

It is a remarkable coincidence that just at this time Thomas Jefferson was also compiling his little book called "The Morals of Jesus." Each man was impelled by the same motives, and each used the same methods. Each of them was desirous of avoiding controversy. Each cut away everything that he regarded as extraneous and a later addition. Each omitted all the legendary and miraculous material.

It might have been expected that the Christian missionaries would have welcomed this unexpected assistance from an influential Hindu. But no, most of the missionaries of that day in India belonged to the narrowest school of Calvinism, to whom the atonement was the whole of the Gospel. Instead of commending Rammohun for introducing the moral teachings of Jesus to his countrymen, they attacked him for being a heathen, and expressed the fear that the Precepts of Jesus might "greatly injure the cause of truth."

The bitter controversy that followed turned mainly upon the question of the unity of God, and since this was the main passion of Rammohun's life, he threw himself into the fray with his whole heart. He became acquainted at just this time in a friendlier way with a certain missionary, Rev. William Adam and to the consternation of his opponents converted him to Unitarianism. The news of the conversion of a Christian missionary by an intelligent heathen travelled 'round the world. The convert was dubbed "the second fallen Adam." But the Unitarians in England and America were stirred to missionary enthusiasm.

In 1821 a Unitarian mission was established and

Mr. Adams placed over it as minister. But the mission did not succeed. It neither attracted the European residents or the educated Indians. Congregations melted away, and finally Mr. Adams retired, a heart-broken man, in 1828. It was on the ruins of his work, however, that the new theistic church was built.

Convinced at last that only an indigenous movement, not imported, not exotic, would succeed, Rammohun organized the Brahmo Somaj, the Church of God, formed for the worship of the one God on the basis of the old Vedas. A church was opened on January 23, 1830, the date which is now remembered as the birthday of the Brahmo Somaj. It won immediate support among the educated Hindus of Calcutta, and its funds rapidly increased. From the strong roots of Hindu monetheism a liberal movement has grown under the name of Unitarian Christianity.

One of Rammohun's favorite sayings was from the philosopher Saadi: "The true way of serving God is to do good to man." Let it not be thought that the preeminence of Rammohun was due solely to his successful efforts to establish the worship of the one God. His work as a social reformer was of extraordinary significance. To him, more than to any other, India owes the abolition of Suttee, or the immolation of widows on the funeral pyres of their dead husbands. In the year 1828, when the first steps towards the organization of the Brahmo Somaj was taken as many as 309 widows were burnt alive within the bounds of Calcutta alone. Of this atrocious custom Rammohun Roy was the avowed enemy.

According to Hindu custom, a widow had only three courses open to her, since she could neither remarry, nor inherit any of her husband's wealth. She must live in misery dependent upon the charity of others, she must become a prostitute, or she must consent to be burned alive with her husband's body. When Rammohun's eldest brother died his widow became a suttee. When, however, she felt the flames, she endeavored to escape in her terror, but the priests and her orthodox relations forced her back on the pile with bamboo poles, and held her there until she died, her shrieks drowned by the loud beating of drums and brazen instruments. Rammohun, filled with horror and indignation, vowed to eradicate this atrocious custom.

He wrote articles proving by the ancient Hindu scriptures that Suttee was not a religious duty. He went to the burning-grounds in Calcutta and tried to dissuade the widows from their determination. He appealed to the slow, official mind of the government, afraid to interfere with the religious convictions of the people. In the end he won, and in December, 1829, Suttee was declared to be illegal.

The modernizing of India was due primarily to the substitution of the English education for the oriental one. In this work Rammohun was pre-eminent. He was himself a master of the ancient learning of his people, but he knew that India could be saved only through a knowledge of the Western sciences. He started and maintained an English School, he helped Dr. Alexander Duff to found another, he assisted in promoting the Hindu College. He continued tirelessly in his work until his death. Just after his death the government formally inaugurated the policy of English education, which in the succeeding century was to remake India.

His service to the cause of literature is no less distinctive. He departed from the established custom of carrying on discussions in the ancient languages, and laid the foundation of Bengalee prose. He wrote a grammar, he enriched the language, and gave to it a literature.

Rammohun was likewise the father of native journalism in India. He founded and published the first weekly paper. When a little later the government attempted to suppress the native papers by licensing regulations, Rammohun protested, and wrote a plea which is the Areopagitica of Indian literature. "I would be free," said he, "or not be at all."

So his life of amazing versatility and almost superhuman activity drew to its close. He resolved to visit England, an unofficial ambassador of the Indian peoples. He had interpreted England to India, he was now to interpret India to England. He set sail, the first Brahman to cross the seas and to break the spell that the ocean had long cast over India. He was received by the king. The East India Company gave him a dinner. His dignity, his culture, his deep religious fervor were a revelation to the English of the kind of people they had conquered. He assisted in defeating the appeal of the orthodox Hindus against the abolition of Suttee. He helped in liberalizing the charter of the East India Company. He watched with keen interest the fight over the Reform Bill in Parliament, and asserted publicly that if it were defeated he would renounce his allegiance to England, and settle in America. But he lived to see the Reform Bill pass.

All this while his health was becoming more precarious. He went to Bristol to rest with some friends before his return to India, and there he died.

It is significant that the last word on his lips was that sacred word of Hindus "Aum." Religion was the deepest impulse of his life. His spiritual sympathies were indeed so broad that he once said that after his death the followers of every religion would reckon him as one of them. The Mohammedans would call him a Mohammedan, the Hindus would call him a Vedantic Hindu, the Christians a Unitarian Christian. But a friend observed that he really belonged to no sect. His religion was universal theism.

Rammohun Roy, says one of his biographers, "was the arch which spanned the gulf that yawned between ancient caste and modern humanity, between superstition and science, between despotism and democracy, between immobile custom and a conservative progress, between a bewildering polytheism and a pure theism." That is what he means to India. What does he mean to us? To us he is, I believe, a luminous example of what religion must be to us and to our day, if it is to survive and to serve humanity. "The true way of serving God is to do good to man." That is it—in the depths of our being a passionate conviction of the reality of the spiritual order, and then a selfless devotion to the world about us. And to us it may be said, as it was said by Tagore to his own countrymen: "If we fail him in this day of our nation-building, if we do not observe perfect equity of human relationship offering uncompromising fight to all forms and conventions, however ancient they may be in usage, which separate man and man, we shall be pitiful in our failure, and shamed forever in the history of man. Our futility will be in the measure of the greatness of Rammohun Roy."

CHARLES R. JOY.

# The Study Table

## Annie Besant

I

Mrs. Besant was a prolific writer. Her work in the journalistic field alone was indefatigable and highly successful. Her books and pamphlets were innumerable. In Theosophy they constitute a large part of the literature of that remarkable religious cult. Among many other titles may be mentioned the following:

"Reincarnation."
"Seven Principles of Man."
"Death and After."
"Man and His Bodies."
"Evolution and Life Form."
"A Study in Consciousness."
"Theosophy and the New Psychology."
"The Perfecting of Man."
"The Changing World."
"The Religious Problem in India."
"India, Bond or Free: A World Problem."

II

The most important book on Mrs. Besant's life is her own "Autobiography," published in 1893. This obviously includes no account of the second, or Indian, period of her career. In addition are the following:

—"The Life of Annie Besant," by Geoffrey West.

—"The Passionate Pilgrim," by Gertrude Marvin Williams.

—"The Mind of Annie Besant," by Theodore Besterman.

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## India in World Politics

This interesting work, here appearing in a new edition,* is divided into two parts. In the first part, the author by a series of brilliant and concise essays has tried to establish the central theme that the British world politics, during the past three centuries, has been considerably influenced by the pivotal idea of maintaining and strengthening supremacy over India. In making this thesis conclusive the author has discussed many questions of world politics in an objective and scholarly fashion, supported by British, American and western authorities. The topics discussed cover the fields of Anglo-French, Anglo-Russian, Anglo-German, Anglo-Turkish, Anglo-Arabian, Anglo-Persian, Anglo-Afghan, Anglo-Chinese, Anglo-Japanese and Anglo-American relations, as influenced by British control over India. The author shows that one of the most important motives behind British world policies today is consolidation of British power in the vast region between Egypt and China.

In the second part of the book the author gives a survey of British imperialism in India, a history of the Indian independence movement, and a consideration of the future of India as a world power. According to Dr. Das, British imperialism in India is political as well as economic, and its effect has been disastrous to the Indian people. This thesis is supported by the writings of British authorities, the Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald and others, the renowned French authority, Prof. Demangeon, and many American historians. In his survey of the evolution of the Indian independence movement since the Sepoy Rebellion (1856-1857) to the present time, the author comes to the conclusion that unless Britain in the near future makes substantial concessions to the Indian people, leading to *actual* dominion status, which Gandhi calls "the substance of independence," the Indian nationalist movement will become more radical and end in the separation of India from the British Empire and the establishment of the federated republic of the United States of India. The author holds that whatever may be the immediate outcome of the struggle for freedom in India, India is bound to play a very important part in the world politics of tomorrow.

The American edition of the book has been described by Senator Borah as the best discussion on the subject. Prof. Dr. Karl Haushofer, of the University of Munich, a recognized authority on Oriental politics, in his introduction to the German edition of the book, asserts that Dr. Das's work should be regarded as a "first class source book" on the subject. One may not agree with all the conclusions of the author, yet this is the only book (so far as we know) on the subject which gives the views of an Indian scholar well-versed in world politics and the history of the Indian Nationalist movement, and which establishes that the Indian problem is not Britain's private affair but a vital concern for the whole world. For this reason alone the book should be welcomed by all students of modern India.

In 1930 an Indian edition of Dr. Das's "India in World Politics" was brought out by the Saraswaty Library of Calcutta, and was promptly proscribed by the British authorities. It is gratifying that a German edition of the work has been very well received by scholars, publicists and statesmen of various countries in Europe. Wide circulation of this work will remove some of the misconceptions about India which have been fostered systematically by British imperialists and their supporters all over the world.

KAMAL

*"*Indien in der Weltpolitik,*" by Taraknath Das. Published by Calwey Verlag, Munchen, Germany. 1932.

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## Saviors of the World!

What magic lies in those four words!

What music in the inspiration which they bring to the human soul!

To be a world-Saviour—what does it mean?

It means that all the world's ignorance is less because you know:

that all the world's sin is less because you are pure;

that all the world's sorrow is less because you are sharing it;

that all the world's weakness is less because you lend to it your strength.

Struggle to be strong, not in order that you may be strong, but that the world may be stronger.

Struggle to be wise, not that you may be wise, but that the world may be the wiser.

Struggle to be pure, not that you may be pure, but that the whole world may be nearer to the purity that is divine.

Care only for the upward treading of the world and the little help you may bring to it.

You must either be lifted or lift.

You must either be a clog or wings to lift the world upward on its road.

This only is worth living for—that the world may be better because we have been living in it; this only is the one crown of humanity—that the man crowns himself with thorns in order that others may be crowned with life immortal.

—*Annie Besant.*

### Earth's Day to Come

I know not of whose mazed and hampered mind
Were writ the two dread lines that end this screed—
Fit epitaph for most of humankind,
Betrayed by circumstance or slain by greed.

Not battlefields alone behold men bleed;
In heedless city streets and myriad homes
Dwell thousands maimed, though high in thought and deed—
Held prostrate by Frustration's grinning Gnomes.

But smile, O Man! thy dream shall some day win,
Upbuilding for mankind such Citadel
Of Sympathy that all shall thrive therein;—
No soul thenceforth to wail at Gates of Hell,
"Look in my face: my name is 'Might-have been';
I am also called 'No-more,' 'Too-late,' 'Farewell.'"

JAMES H. WEST.

### Participation

Afloat in air!—my plane and I alone,
A tireless eagle in the trackless blue.
Above the clouds in happy sunniest zone
My endless daily pleasure I pursue.

O glorious! to dwell above earth's din—
No joy withstood, no wish ungratified.
What matter if no other enter in!—
My self my deity, in bliss ensky'd! . . .

But ah! beneath me there are souls in pain:
I hear their clamor in a rising flood.
A hungering multitude they wax and wane;
Injustice rules them and their tears are blood.
Descend, my plane!—unhesitantly glide!
While brothers groan my place is at their side.

JAMES H. WEST.

## The Field

(*Continued from page* 50)

The conference was really international in character. Its executive session was most interesting. In this session reports of various societies in various countries—the United States of America, France, Holland, Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, Italy and China—which are interested in Indian Freedom were read by delegates from these lands; and serious discussions on future work were carried on with a spirit of deliberation.

The most interesting feature of the Third International Conference for India was that even Mahatma Gandhi, who in the past did not believe in foreign work, sent his personal representative, Mr. Bholabhai Desai of Gujrat. The left wing of the Congress Party was represented by Hon. V. J. Patel and Hon. Subhas Chandra Bose. (Owing to serious and sudden illness, Mr. Patel who came to Geneva from Vienna, could not take part in the conference.) Mrs. Hamid Ali, Mrs. Keron Bose, Mrs. Mayadevi Ganguli represented Indian women. The public meeting of the conference was presided over by Dr. Edmond Privat, the President of the International Committee for India. This meeting was attended by about one thousand persons. Mrs. Bholabhai Desai and Subhas Chandra Bose expounded the position of the All India National Congress and the repressive measures adopted by the British Government of India to crush the movement for Indian Freedom. Mr. Bose emphasized the point that the Indian people, especially the youth, will not be satisfied unless they achieve complete independence. Miss Agatha Harrison, in a short but pointed speech, denounced England's policy of repression and appealed for better understanding between England and India and laid stress on the necessity of making known to the outside world the work of the Indian people towards the progress of their country. Mrs. Hamid Ali spoke of the strength of the women's movement in India, its concern for social reforms, for securing the franchise on a basis that will give full opportunities for services to the country. She explained the determination of the organized women of India to resist any effort to bring communalism within their ranks.

The spirit of the conference can be well understood from the following resolutions adopted unanimusly:

1. This Conference recognizes India's right to complete independence and her right to decide the form of her government and of her future relations with Great Britain and other nations.

2. This Conference sends the expression of its admiration to Mahatma Gandhi and all the Indians who fight for the liberation of their country and for the abolition of untouchability without deviating from their condemnation of all recourse to violence. This conference extends its hearty appreciation to the British and other friends working for the freedom of India.

3. This Conference condemns the policy of illtreatment of political prisoners in Indian prisons and concentration camps, particularly in the Andaman Islands, where two political prisoners have recently died as a result of hungerstrike, and demands human treatment for political prisoners in India and the abandonment of the Andaman Islands as a prison for political prisoners.

4. This Conference urges the British authorities to give up the cruel and unjust air bombing, which strikes innocent victims and is a cause of delay in the adoption of an international disarmament convention.

5. This Conference draws the attention of the Disarmament Conference on the heavy burden imposed upon India in order to maintain on her soil an army of occupation at the service of a foreign power and on the abnormal situa-

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tion thus created between two members of the League of Nations.

6. This Conference considers it wrong that disputes arising between India and the other members of the British Commonwealth should not fall within the jurisdiction of the League of Nations and considers it unfair to the other members of the League that one member thereof (Great Britain) should nominate the delegates of another (India).

7. This Conference heartily supports the program of the All Indian National Congress regarding the settlement of Indo-British financial obligations by an impartial International Commission, the Chairman of which must be a neutral member of the Hague Court not belonging to India or to the rest of the British Commonwealth. This Conference condemns the policy of financial exploitation of India by Britain and the Imperial Preference forced upon India much to her detriment inasmuch as this measure extends special monopolistic privilege to one foreign power and puts the other nations to unjustifiable disadvantage.

8. This Conference condemns all discriminatory measures adopted against the Indian people on racial grounds in various countries, especially within the British Empire. It specially condemns the idea of the Government of the Union of South Africa, which is contemplating the scheme of sending out South African borne Indians to British Guinea for the purpose of colonization. This principle is detrimental to the real interests of Indians vis a vis the rest of the members of the British Commonwealth and particularly as regards South Africa.

9. The Conference deplores that Ordinance rule should be embodied in law and thinks that an impartial inquiry should be instituted into the allegations about brutal means of repression against non-violent Indians.

10. This Conference asks the International Committee for India to do all it can to redress inaccurate news and prevent the West from hearing only one side on Indian affairs.

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